

(C) assessing the efficacy and outcomes of medical rehabilitation therapies and practices and assisting technologies;

(D) developing improved assistive technology to improve function and independence; and

(E) understanding whole body system responses to physical impairments, disabilities, and societal and functional limitations; and

(2) replicate the findings of network members or other researchers for scientific and translation purposes.

(c) COORDINATION OF CLINICAL TRIALS NETWORKS; REPORTS.—The Director may, as appropriate, provide for the coordination of information among networks funded through this section and ensure regular communication among members of the networks, and may require the periodic preparation of reports on the activities of the networks and submission of reports to the Director.

**Subtitle C—Improving Quality of Life for Persons With Paralysis and Other Physical Disabilities**

**SEC. 14301. PROGRAMS TO IMPROVE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR PERSONS WITH PARALYSIS AND OTHER PHYSICAL DISABILITIES.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services (in this subtitle referred to as the “Secretary”) may study the unique health challenges associated with paralysis and other physical disabilities and carry out projects and interventions to improve the quality of life and long-term health status of persons with paralysis and other physical disabilities. The Secretary may carry out such projects directly and through awards of grants or contracts.

(b) CERTAIN ACTIVITIES.—Activities under subsection (a) may include—

(1) the development of a national paralysis and physical disability quality of life action plan, to promote health and wellness in order to enhance full participation, independent living, self-sufficiency, and equality of opportunity in partnership with voluntary health agencies focused on paralysis and other physical disabilities, to be carried out in coordination with the State-based Disability and Health Program of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention;

(2) support for programs to disseminate information involving care and rehabilitation options and quality of life grant programs supportive of community-based programs and support systems for persons with paralysis and other physical disabilities;

(3) in collaboration with other centers and national voluntary health agencies, the establishment of a population-based database that may be used for longitudinal and other research on paralysis and other disabling conditions; and

(4) the replication and translation of best practices and the sharing of information across States, as well as the development of comprehensive, unique, and innovative programs, services, and demonstrations within existing State-based disability and health programs of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention which are designed to support and advance quality of life programs for persons living with paralysis and other physical disabilities focusing on—

(A) caregiver education;

(B) promoting proper nutrition, increasing physical activity, and reducing tobacco use;

(C) education and awareness programs for health care providers;

(D) prevention of secondary complications;

(E) home- and community-based interventions;

(F) coordinating services and removing barriers that prevent full participation and integration into the community; and

(G) recognizing the unique needs of underserved populations.

(c) GRANTS.—The Secretary may award grants in accordance with the following:

(1) To State and local health and disability agencies for the purpose of—

(A) establishing a population-based database that may be used for longitudinal and other research on paralysis and other disabling conditions;

(B) developing comprehensive paralysis and other physical disability action plans and activities focused on the items listed in subsection (b)(4);

(C) assisting State-based programs in establishing and implementing partnerships and collaborations that maximize the input and support of people with paralysis and other physical disabilities and their constituent organizations;

(D) coordinating paralysis and physical disability activities with existing State-based disability and health programs;

(E) providing education and training opportunities and programs for health professionals and allied caregivers; and

(F) developing, testing, evaluating, and replicating effective intervention programs to maintain or improve health and quality of life.

(2) To private health and disability organizations for the purpose of—

(A) disseminating information to the public;

(B) improving access to services for persons living with paralysis and other physical disabilities and their caregivers;

(C) testing model intervention programs to improve health and quality of life; and

(D) coordinating existing services with State-based disability and health programs.

(d) COORDINATION OF ACTIVITIES.—The Secretary shall ensure that activities under this section are coordinated as appropriate by the agencies of the Department of Health and Human Services.

(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—For the purpose of carrying out this section, there is authorized to be appropriated \$25,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2008 through 2011.

**TITLE XV—SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION FACILITIES AUTHORIZATION**

**SEC. 15101. LABORATORY AND SUPPORT SPACE, EDGEWATER, MARYLAND.**

(a) AUTHORITY TO DESIGN AND CONSTRUCT.—The Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution is authorized to design and construct laboratory and support space to accommodate the Mathias Laboratory at the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center in Edgewater, Maryland.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section a total of \$41,000,000 for fiscal years 2009 through 2011. Such sums shall remain available until expended.

**SEC. 15102. LABORATORY SPACE, GAMBOA, PANAMA.**

(a) AUTHORITY TO CONSTRUCT.—The Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution is authorized to construct laboratory space to accommodate the terrestrial research program of the Smithsonian tropical research institute in Gamboa, Panama.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section a total of \$14,000,000 for fiscal years 2009 and 2010. Such sums shall remain available until expended.

**SEC. 15103. CONSTRUCTION OF GREENHOUSE FACILITY.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution is authorized to construct a greenhouse facility at its museum support facility in Suitland, Maryland, to maintain the horticultural operations of,

and preserve the orchid collection held in trust by, the Smithsonian Institution.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated \$12,000,000 to carry out this section. Such sums shall remain available until expended.

**NOTICE OF HEARING**

**COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I would like to announce for the information of the Senate and the public that a hearing has been scheduled before the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. The hearing will be held on Tuesday, March 24, at 2:30 p.m., in room SD-366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The purpose of the hearing is to consider the nomination of Thomas Strickland, to be Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife, Department of the Interior.

Because of the limited time available for the hearing, witnesses may testify by invitation only. However, those wishing to submit written testimony for the hearing record may do so by sending it to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, United States Senate, Washington, D.C. 20510-6150, or by e-mail to Amanda Kelly at [kelly@energy.senate.gov](mailto:kelly@energy.senate.gov).

For further information, please contact Sam Fowler at (202) 224-7571 or Amanda Kelly at (202) 224-6836.

**AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET**

**COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES**

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, March 17, 2008. At 10 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

**COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING AND URBAN AFFAIRS**

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 17, 2009 at 10 a.m. to conduct a hearing entitled “Perspectives on Modernizing Insurance Regulation.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

**COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate to conduct a hearing on Tuesday, March 17, 2009, at 10 a.m., in room SD-366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

**COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be authorized to